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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XLV—No. 11 **September, 1957**

IT is barely possible that the minds of the present generations are not quite ripe for the reception of Occult truths. Such will be the retrospect furnished to advanced thinkers of the history of the acceptance of Esoteric Philosophy — fully and unconditionally. Meanwhile the generations will continue to be led away by prejudice and preconceptions. Occult Sciences will have the finger of scorn pointed at them from every street corner, and everyone will seek to ridicule and crush them.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

CONTENTS

MIND—THE MAGICIAN 481
LODGES OF MAGIC 486
CHELAS AND LAY CHELAS 492
WHO ARE WE, REALLY? 499
MAHATMAS AND CHELAS 500
NOTES ON THE TAO TE KING 502
FREENESS 506
INVIOLABILITY OF SELF 508
SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS 509
YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—AND ANSWER 512
THE IRREVOCABILITY OF KARMA 515
MORAL QUESTIONS 516
ON THE LOOKOUT 519

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(*b*) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A U M

Poison harms no one who has no wound.—*The Dhammapada*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLV **September, 1957** **No. 11**

MIND—THE MAGICIAN

THE reading of *The Secret Doctrine* has many purposes, but one of the best reasons for regular sessions with its pages is the opportunity this affords for discovery of the power of the mind. Knowledge, we are told, is constituted of identification of the perceiving intelligence with the object of perception. To know, we must *be* what we wish to know.

Intermediary, however, between this sort of first-hand knowledge and the ignorance which is characteristic of a separate existence, are the constructions of the mind—those majestic schemes of the imagination which endeavor to approximate reality and are called, in *The Secret Doctrine,* "metaphysics." Speaking of the mysterious beginnings of the universe—of the primeval causes which propel everything into existence—*The Secret Doctrine* says that the chief cause of manifestation is "the desire to exist, an outcome of Nidana and Maya." The text continues, laying the foundation for the study of metaphysics by all those who would penetrate behind the veil of superficial explanation:

> According to esoteric teaching, the real cause of that supposed desire, and of all existence, remains forever hidden, and its first emanations are the most complete abstractions mind can conceive. These abstractions must of necessity be postulated as the cause of the material Universe which presents itself to the senses and intellect; and they underlie the secondary and subordinate powers of Nature, which, anthropomorphized, have been worshipped as God and gods by the common herd of every age. It is impossible to conceive of anything without a cause; the attempt to do so makes the mind a blank. This is virtually the condition to which the mind must come at last when we try to trace back the chain of causes and effects, but both

> science and religion jump to this conclusion of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions. These abstractions become more and more concrete as they approach our plane of existence, until finally they phenomenalize in the form of the material Universe, by a process of conversion of metaphysics into physics, analogous to that by which steam can be condensed into water, and the water frozen into ice. (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 44-45.)

But, it may be asked, for what *practical* reason should we press our minds after these difficult abstractions? Why, when the need of the world is for Brotherhood and Ethics, must we risk getting lost in the maze of metaphysical conceptions?

The answer to this question is the same as the reply to similar questions concerning the study of the three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine. Progressive mastery of these great, abstract ideas is essential to understanding the very principles of Brotherhood—the idea of the Self, of ultimate Reality, sometimes called "God," and of the processes of natural law in both the visible and the invisible regions of existence. Without a true idea of Self, the practice of brotherhood easily lapses into sentimentality. Without a true idea of Reality, the best-intentioned of men may succumb to the fears and insecurities of their ignorance, bowing in subservience to an irrational God, or giving way to a cynical materialism. Metaphysics enables the student to envision the objectives of his search for truth without a childish foreshortening of the dimensions of what he seeks. He is at least able to acquire a reverence for the majesty of the profound conceptions which symbolize, if they cannot contain, the great truths of life and being.

Where a man's heart is, there will be found his truth. Study is a means of placing one's heart. Before he can live as a transcendental being, he must learn to *imagine himself* as such a being. For this the mind needs breadth, and depth and points—the "frame of reference" supplied by the metaphysics of the Secret Doctrine.

Clear conceptions of what a human being is, for example, are virtually impossible without absorbing reflection on the great abstractions of Spirit and Matter. This may be made quickly apparent by quotation from *The Secret Doctrine*. On these dificult subjects, it is stated

> To "Spirit" is referable every manifestation of consciousness, reflective or direct, and of *unconscious purposiveness* (to adopt a modern expression used in Western *philosophy,* so-called) as evidenced in

> the Vital Principle, and Nature's submission to the majestic sequence of immutable law. "Matter" must be regarded as objectivity in its purest abstraction—the self-existing basis whose septenary manvantaric differentiations constitute the objective reality underlying the phenomena of each phase of conscious existence. During the period of Universal Pralaya, Cosmic Ideation is non-existent; and the variously differentiated states of Cosmic Substance are resolved back again into the primary state of abstract potential objectivity.

These are the generalized metaphysical conceptions of Spirit and Matter. Now comes the bearing of these abstract ideas upon the conception of the human being (I, 328-29):

> Cosmic Ideation is said to be non-existent during Pralayic periods, for the simple reason that there is no one, and nothing, to perceive its effects. There can be no manifestation of Consciousness, semi-consciousness, or even "unconscious purposiveness," except through the vehicle of matter; that is to say, on this our plane, wherein human consciousness *in its normal state* cannot soar beyond what is known as transcendental metaphysics, it is only through some molecular aggregation or fabric that Spirit wells up in a stream of individual or sub-conscious subjectivity.

As for human perceptions under these conditions—and, therefore, all of "modern science"—*The Secret Doctrine* states:

> The pure object apart from consciousness is unknown to us, while living on the plane of our three-dimensional World; as we know only the mental states it excites in the perceiving Ego. And, so long as we enjoy our five senses and no more, and do not know how to divorce our all-perceiving *Ego* (the Higher Self) from the thraldom of these senses—so long will it be impossible to break the barrier which separates it from a knowledge of *things in themselves* (*or Substance*). That Ego, progressing in an arc of ascending subjectivity, must exhaust the experience of every plane. But not till the Unit is merged in the ALL, whether on this or any other plane, and Subject and Object alike vanish in the absolute negation of the Nirvanic State (negation, again, only *from our plane*), is scaled that peak of Omniscience—the Knowledge of things-in-themselves. (I, 329-30.)

Here, in the cipher of metaphysics, is the whole story and underlying law of evolution. What, in this case, is the evoluting unit? It is, as a footnote to the foregoing passage declares: "Cosmic Ideation focussed in a principle or *upadhi* (basis)," resulting in "the consciousness of the individual Ego." The migrating soul, then, is a center of cosmic ideation, focussed in a substantial basis ("some molecular

aggregation or fabric"), surrounded by a constellation of perceptions appropriate to the sensitivity of the vehicle. We are each and all small universes of thought, capable of a wide gamut of perceptions, to which, according to the way we think of ourselves, we assign an absolute or relative reality. The tendency is to imagine that *our* perceptions encompass all possible experience. As *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 40) puts it:

> Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya.

How do we awaken to the "shadows" we mistook for "realities"? There are at least two ways in which illusions are dissipated. It happens by emotional disillusionment, which brings a shock to the being, shaking his self-confidence and weakening his strength. In such cases, it is only Mother Nature which sustains him. The need to continue living, to respond to the demands of *Tanha,* keeps him going, and while his mental state may be one of despairing confusion and self-condemnation, the cycle of weakness ultimately passes, although too often only from finding one further illusion to embrace. Better than this is the increased self-consciousness which brings a continuous questioning of the most cherished illusions. By this means, the experience of disillusionment may be worked out more abstractly, *in the mind,* with less disorganizing pain—with, in fact, the joy of philosophic discovery as a counter-emotion to take the place of the lost illusion. Best of all is the sustaining calm which comes from study of the very principle of illusion, for from this arises a deeper realization of the changeless Self, and the ability, therefore, to pass through experience impersonally, to learn from it without losing oneself in it.

From metaphysics, we gain the principle of studying all manner of illusions, and may acquire the habits of the philosopher. And this, while not yet wisdom, is akin to wisdom and its forerunner.

Metaphysics affords the opportunity to learn to think of oneself as a spiritual being. Further, it enables its devotee to break out of the

shackles of his time and circumstances and to go his own pace in the quest for truth. To open this opportunity to men in the world has been the purpose of every occult school. The Eastern Schools are amply described in *The Secret Doctrine*—or at any rate, their teachings are there expounded. All the occult schools of history have made a prerequisite of metaphysics. In the West, Pythagoras demanded mastery of mathematics, which was the form of his metaphysical teachings. The metaphysics of the Neoplatonists is expounded by Plotinus in the *Enneads.* If the student is to help to *lift* his age to a higher level—and this, after all, is the mode of human evolution, which proceeds by the effort of individuals—he needs the liberation of mind that metaphysics provides. *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 326-27) makes this very plain:

> The evolution of the God-Idea proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution. So true it is that the noblest ideal to which the religious Spirit of one age can soar, will appear but a gross caricature to the philosophic mind in a succeeding epoch! The philosophers themselves had to be *initiated into perceptive mysteries,* before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. Otherwise—outside such initiation —for every thinker there will be a "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakeably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma. Outside of initiation, the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective environments and periods. The ideals of both are only the necessary result of their temperaments, and the outcome of that phase of intellectual progress to which a nation, in its collectivity, has attained.

It must not be supposed, as this passage goes on to explain, that any sort of "speculation" can serve as metaphysical inquiry. It is the particular course of occult metaphysics which brings the mind into contact with the abstract outlines of the inner universe of being, the world of causes, and prepares his mental nature for initiation into the "perceptive mysteries." And, as William Q. Judge has said, "The time must presently come when the really advanced thinkers of the age will be compelled to lay by their indifference, their scorn and conceit, and follow the lines of philosophical investigation laid down in *The Secret Doctrine.*"

LODGES OF MAGIC

When fiction rises pleasing to the eye,
Men will believe, because they love the lie;
But Truth herself, if clouded with a frown,
Must have some solemn proofs to pass her down.
—CHURCHILL

ONE of the most esteemed of our friends in occult research propounds the question of the formation of "working Lodges" of the Theosophical Society, for the development of adeptship. If the practical impossibility of forcing this process has been shown once, in the course of the theosophical movement, it has scores of times. It is hard to check one's natural impatience to tear aside the veil of the Temple. To gain the divine knowledge like the prize in a classical tripos, by a system of coaching and cramming, is the ideal of the average beginner in occult study. The refusal of the originators of the Theosophical Society to encourage such false hopes, has led to the formation of bogus Brotherhoods of *Luxor* (and Armley Jail?) as speculations on human credulity. How enticing the bait for gudgeons in the following specimen prospectus, which a few years ago caught some of our most earnest friends and Theosophists.

"Students of the Occult Science, searchers after truth, and Theosophists who may have been disappointed in their expectations of Sublime Wisdom being freely dispensed by HINDU MAHATMAS, are cordially invited to send in their names to . . . . , when, if found suitable, they can be admitted, after a short probationary term, as Members of an Occult Brotherhood, who do not boast of their knowledge or attainments, but teach 'freely' (at £1 to £5 *per* letter?), 'and without reserve' (the nastiest portions of P. B. Randolph's 'Eulis'), 'all they find worthy to receive' (read: teachings on a commercial basis; the cash going to the teachers, and the extracts from Randolph and other 'love-philter' sellers to the pupils!)"*

NOTE.—This article by H. P. Blavatsky was originally published in *Lucifer*, October, 1888, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY, July, 1943.

* Documents on view at LUCIFER Office, viz., Secret MSS, written in the handwriting of _____ (name suppressed for past considerations), "Provincial Grand Master of the Northern Section." One of these documents bears the heading, "A brief Key to the Eulian Mysteries," *i.e. Tantric* black magic on a phallic basis. No; the members of *this* Occult Brotherhood "do not boast of their knowledge." Very sensible on their part: least said soonest mended.

If rumour be true, some of the English rural districts, especially Yorkshire, are overrun with fraudulent astrologers and fortunetellers, who pretend to be Theosophists, the better to swindle a higher class of credulous patrons than their legitimate prey, the servant-maid and callow youth. If the "lodges of magic," suggested in the following letter to the Editors of this Magazine, were founded, without having taken the greatest precautions to admit only the best candidates to membership, we should see these vile exploitations of sacred names and things increase an hundredfold. And in this connection, and before giving place to our friend's letter, the senior Editor of LUCIFER begs to inform her friends that she has never had the remotest connection with the so-called "H (ermetic) B (rotherhood) of L (uxor)," and that all representations to the contrary are false and dishonest. There is a secret body—whose diploma, or Certificate of Membership, is held by Colonel Olcott alone among modern men of white blood—to which that name was given by the author of "Isis Unveiled" for convenience of designation,* but which is known among Initiates by quite another one, just as the personage known to the public under the pseudonym of "Koot Hoomi," is called by a totally different name among his acquaintance. What the real name of that society is, it would puzzle the "Eulian" phallicists of the "H. B. of L." to tell. The real names of Master Adepts and Occult Schools are never, *under any circumstances,* revealed to the profane; and the names of the personages who have been talked about in connection with modern Theosophy, are in the possession only of the two chief founders of the Theosophical Society. And now, having said so much by way of preface, let us pass on to our correspondent's letter. He writes:

"A friend of mine, a natural mystic, had intended to form, with others, a Branch T. S. in his town. Surprised at his delay, I wrote to ask the reason. His reply was that he had learned that the T. S. only met and talked, and did nothing practical. I always did think the T. S. ought

* In "Isis Unveiled," vol. ii, p. 308. It may be added that the "Brotherhood of Luxor" mentioned by Kenneth Mackenzie (*vide* his *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*) as having its seat in America, had, after all, nothing to do with the Brotherhood mentioned by, and known to us, as was ascertained after the publication of "Isis" from a letter written by this late Masonic author to a friend in New York. The Brotherhood Mackenzie knew of was simply a Masonic Society on a rather more secret basis, and, as he stated in the letter, he had *heard of, but knew nothing of our* Brotherhood, which, having had a branch at Luxor (Egypt), was thus purposely referred to by us under this name alone. This led some schemers to infer that there was a regular Lodge of Adepts of that name, and to assure some credulous friends and Theosophists that the "H. B. of L." was either identical or a branch of the same, supposed to be near Lahore! !—which was the most flagrant untruth.

to have Lodges in which something practical should be done. Cagliostro understood well this craving of humans for something before their eyes, when he instituted the Egyptian Rite, and put it in practice in various Freemason lodges. There are many readers of LUCIFER in ———shire. Perhaps in it there might be a suggestion for students to form such lodges for themselves, and to try, by their united wills, to develop certain powers in one of the number, and then through the whole of them in succession. I feel sure numbers would enter such lodges, and create a great interest for Theosophy." "A."

In the above note of our venerable and learned friend is the echo of the voices of ninety-nine hundredths of the members of the Theosophical Society: one-hundredth only have the correct idea of the function and scope of our Branches. The glaring mistake generally made is in the conception of adeptship and the path thereunto. Of all thinkable undertakings that of trying for adeptship is the most difficult. Instead of being obtainable within a few years or one lifetime, it exacts the unremittent struggles of a series of lives, save in cases so rare as to be hardly worth regarding as exceptions to the general rule. The records certainly show that a number of the most revered Indian adepts became so despite their births in the lowest, and seemingly most unlikely, castes. Yet it is well understood that they had been progressing in the upward direction throughout many previous incarnations, and, when they took birth for the last time, there was left but the merest trifle of spiritual evolution to be accomplished, before they became great living adepts. Of course, no one can say that one or all of the possible members of our friend A.'s ideal Cagliostrian lodge might not also be ready for adeptship, but the chance is not good enough to speculate upon: Western civilization seems to develop fighters rather than philosophers, military butchers rather than Buddhas. The plan "A." proposes would be far more likely to end in mediumship than adeptship. Two to one there would not be a member of the lodge who was chaste from boyhood and altogether untainted by the use of intoxicants. This is to say nothing of the candidates' freedom from the polluting effects of the evil influences of the average social environment. Among the indispensable pre-requisites for psychic development, noted in the mystical Manuals of all Eastern religious systems, are a pure place, pure diet, pure companionship, and a

pure mind. Could "A." guarantee these? It is certainly desirable that there should be some school of instruction for members of our Society; and had the purely exoteric work and duties of the Founders been less absorbing, probably one such would have been established long ago. Yet not for practical instruction, on the plan of Cagliostro, which, by-the-bye, brought direful suffering upon his head, and has left no marked traces behind to encourage a repetition in our days. "When the pupil is ready, the teacher will be found waiting," says an Eastern maxim. The Masters do not have to hunt up recruits in special _____shire lodges, nor drill them through mystical non-commissioned officers: time and space are no barriers between them and the aspirant; where thought can pass they can come. Why did an old and learned Kabalist like "A." forget this fact? And let him also remember that the potential adept may exist in the Whitechapels and Five Points of Europe and America, as well as in the cleaner and more "cultured" quarters; that some poor ragged wretch, begging a crust, may be "whiter-souled" and more attractive to the adept than the average bishop in his robe, or a cultured citizen in his costly dress. For the extension of the theosophical movement, a useful channel for the irrigation of the dry fields of contemporary thought with the water of life, Branches are needed everywhere; not mere groups of passive sympathisers, such as the slumbering army of church-goers, whose eyes are shut while the "devil" sweeps the field; no, not such. Active, wide-awake, earnest, unselfish Branches are needed, whose members shall not be constantly unmasking their selfishness by asking "What will it profit us to join the Theosophical Society, and how much will it harm us?" but be putting to themselves the question "Can we not do substantial good to mankind by working in this good cause with all our hearts, our minds, and our strength?" If "A." would only bring his _____shire friends, who pretend to occult leanings, to view the question from this side, he would be doing them a real kindness. The Society can get on without them, but they cannot afford to let it do so.

Is it profitable, moreover, to discuss the question of a Lodge receiving even theoretical instruction, until we can be sure that all the members will accept the teachings as coming from the alleged source? Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, or suspicion. It is something to be perceived by the intuition rather than by the reason; being by nature spiritual, not material. Some are so constituted as to be incapable of acquiring knowl-

edge by the exercise of the spiritual faculty; *e.g.* the great majority of physicists. Such are slow, if not wholly incapable of grasping the ultimate truths behind the phenomena of existence. There are many such in the Society; and the body of the discontented are recruited from their ranks. Such persons readily persuade themselves that later teachings, received from exactly the same source as earlier ones, are either false or have been tampered with by chelas, or even third parties. Suspicion and inharmony are the natural result, the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful. Sometimes vanity blinds what was at first strong intuition, the mind is effectually closed against the admission of new truth, and the aspiring student is thrown back to the point where he began. Having jumped at some particular conclusion of his own without full study of the subject, and before the teaching had been fully expounded, his tendency, when proved wrong, is to listen only to the voice of his self-adulation, and cling to his views, whether right or wrong. The Lord Buddha particularly warned his hearers against forming beliefs upon tradition or authority, and before having thoroughly inquired into the subject.

An instance. We have been asked by a correspondent why he should not "be free to suspect some of the so-called 'precipitated' letters as being forgeries," giving as his reason for it that while some of them bear the stamp of (to him) undeniable genuineness, others seem from their contents and style, to be imitations. This is equivalent to saying that he has such an unerring spiritual insight as to be able to detect the false from the true, though he has never met a Master, nor been given any key by which to test his alleged communications. The inevitable consequence of applying his untrained judgment in such cases, would be to make him as likely as not to declare false what was genuine, and genuine what was false. Thus what *criterion* has any one to decide between one "precipitated" letter, or another such letter? Who except their authors, or those whom they employ as their *amanuenses* (the *chelas* and disciples), can tell? For it is hardly one out of a hundred "occult" letters that is ever written by the hand of the Master, in whose name and on whose behalf they are sent, as the Masters have neither need nor leisure to write them; and that when a Master says, "*I* wrote that letter," it means only that every word in it was dictated by him and impressed under his direct supervision. Generally they make their chela, whether near or far away, write (or precipitate) them, by im-

pressing upon his mind the ideas they wish expressed, and if necessary aiding him in the picture-printing process of precipitation. It depends entirely upon the *chela's* state of development, how accurately the ideas may be transmitted and the writing-model imitated. Thus the *non-adept* recipient is left in the dilemma of uncertainty, whether, if one letter is false, all may not be; for, as far as intrinsic evidence goes, all come from the same source, and all are brought by the same mysterious means. But there is another, and a far worse condition implied. For all that the recipient of "occult" letters can possibly know, and on the simple grounds of probability and common honesty, the unseen correspondent who would tolerate one *single fraudulent line in his name,* would wink at an unlimited repetition of the deception. And this leads directly to the following. All the so-called *occult* letters being supported by identical proofs, *they have all to stand or fall together.* If one is to be doubted, then all have, and the series of letters in the "Occult World," "Esoteric Buddhism," etc., etc., may be, and there is no reason why they should not be in such a case—*frauds,* "clever impostures," and "forgeries," such as the ingenuous though stupid agent of the "S.P.R." has made them out to be, in order to raise in the public estimation the "scientific" acumen and standard of his "Principals."

Hence, not a step in advance would be made by a group of students given over to such an unimpressible state of mind, and without any guide *from the occult side* to open their eyes to the esoteric pitfalls. And where are such guides, so far, in our Society? "They be blind leaders of the blind," both falling into the ditch of vanity and self-sufficiency. The whole difficulty springs from the common tendency to draw conclusions from insufficient premises, and play the oracle before ridding oneself of that most stupefying of all psychic anæsthetics—IGNORANCE.

CHELAS AND LAY CHELAS

AS the word *Chela* has, among others, been introduced by Theosophy into the nomenclature of Western metaphysics, and the circulation of our magazine is constantly widening, it will be as well if some more definite explanation than heretofore is given with respect to the meaning of this term and the rules of Chelaship, for the benefit of our European if not Eastern members. A "Chela" then, is one who has offered himself or herself as a pupil to learn practically the "hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man." The spiritual teacher to whom he proposes his candidature is called in India a Guru; and the real Guru is always an Adept in the Occult Science. A man of profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter; and one who has brought his carnal nature under subjection of the WILL; who has developed in himself both the power (*Siddhi*) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being:—this is the real Guru. To offer oneself as a candidate for Chelaship is easy enough, to develop into an Adept the most difficult task any man could possibly undertake. There are scores of "natural-born" poets, mathematicians, mechanics, statesmen, etc., but a natural-born Adept is something practically impossible. For though we do hear at very rare intervals of one who has an extraordinary innate capacity for the acquisition of occult knowledge and power, yet even he has to pass the self-same tests and probations, and go through the same self-training as any less endowed fellow aspirant. In this matter it is most true that there is no royal road by which favorites may travel.

For centuries the selection of Chelas—outside the hereditary group within the *gon-pa* (temple)—has been made by the Himalayan Mahatmas themselves from among the class—in Tibet, a considerable one as to number—of natural mystics. The only exceptions have been in the cases of Western men like Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, Paracelsus, Pico della Mirandola, Count St. Germain, etc., whose temperamental affinity to this celestial science more or less forced the distant Adepts to come into personal relations with them, and enabled them to get such small

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NOTE.—This article by H. P. Blavatsky first appeared in the Supplement to the *Theosophist* for July, 1883, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for March, 1943.

(or large) proportion of the whole truth as was possible under their social surroundings. From Book IV of Kiu-te, Chapter on "the Laws of Upasans," we learn that the qualifications expected in a Chela were:—

1. Perfect physical health;
2. Absolute mental and physical purity;
3. Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings;
4. Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the law of Karma, independent of any power in nature that could interfere: a law whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies;
5. A courage undaunted in every emergency, even by peril to life;
6. An intuitional perception of one's being the vehicle of the manifested Avalokitesvara or Divine Atman (Spirit);
7. Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world, in its relation with, and to, the invisible regions.

Such, at the least, must have been the recommendations of one aspiring to perfect Chelaship. With the sole exception of the 1st, which in rare and exceptional cases might have been modified, each one of these points has been invariably insisted upon, and all must have been more or less developed in the inner nature by the Chela's UNHELPED EXERTIONS, before he could be actually put to the test.

When the self-evolving ascetic—whether in, or outside the active world—has placed himself, according to his natural capacity, above, hence made himself master of, his (1) *Sarira*—body; (2) *Indriya*—senses; (3) *Dosha*—faults; (4) *Dukkha*—pain; and is ready to become one with his *Manas*—mind; *Buddhi*—intellection, or spiritual intelligence; and *Atma*—highest soul, *i.e., spirit.* When he is ready for this, and, further, to recognize in *Atma* the highest ruler in the world of perceptions, and in the will, the highest executive energy (power), then may he under the time-honoured rules, be taken in hand by one of the Initiates. He may then be shown the mysterious path at whose thither end the Chela is taught the unerring discernment of *Phala,* or the fruits of causes produced, and given the means of reaching *Apavarga*—emancipation, from the misery of repeated births (in whose determination the ignorant has no hand), and thus of avoiding *Pretyabhava*—transmigration.

But since the advent of the Theosophical Society, one of whose arduous tasks it was to re-awaken in the Aryan mind the dormant memory of the existence of this science and of those transcendent human capabilities, the rules of Chela selection have become slightly relaxed in one respect. Many members of the Society becoming convinced by practical proof upon the above points, and rightly enough thinking that if other men had hitherto reached the goal, they too if inherently fitted, might reach it by following the same path, pressed to be taken as candidates. And as it would be an interference with Karma to deny them the chance of at least beginning—since they were so importunate, they were given it. The results have been far from encouraging so far, and it is to show these unfortunates the cause of their failure as much as to warn others against rushing heedlessly upon a similar fate, that the writing of the present article has been ordered. The candidates in question, though plainly warned against it in advance, began wrong by selfishly looking to the future and losing sight of the past. They forgot that they had done nothing to deserve the rare honour of selection, nothing which warranted their expecting such a privilege; that they could boast of none of the above enumerated merits. As men of the selfish, sensual world, whether married or single, merchants, civilian or military employees, or members of the learned professions, they had been to a school most calculated to assimilate them to the animal nature, least so to develop their spiritual potentialities. Yet each and all had vanity enough to suppose that their case would be made an exception to the law of countless centuries' establishment as though, indeed, in their person had been born to the world a new *Avatar!* All expected to have hidden things taught, extraordinary powers given them because—well, because they had joined the Theosophical Society. Some had sincerely resolved to amend their lives, and give up their evil courses: we must do them that justice, at all events.

All were refused at first, Col. Olcott, the President, himself, to begin with: and as to the latter gentleman there is now no harm in saying that he was not formally accepted as a Chela until he had proved by more than a year's devoted labours and by a determination which brooked no denial, that he might safely be tested. Then from all sides came complaints—from Hindus, who ought to have known better, as well as from Europeans who, of course, were not in a condition to know anything at all about the rules. The cry was that unless at least a few Theosophists were given the chance to try, the Society could not endure.

Every other noble and unselfish feature of our programme was ignored —a man's duty to his neighbour, to his country, his duty to help, enlighten, encourage and elevate those weaker and less favoured than he; all were trampled out of sight in the insane rush for adeptship. The call for phenomena, phenomena, phenomena, resounded in every quarter, and the Founders were impeded in their real work and teased importunately to intercede with the Mahatmas, against whom the real grievance lay, though their poor agents had to take all the buffets. At last, the word came from the higher authorities that a few of the most urgent candidates should be taken at their word. The result of the experiment would perhaps show better than any amount of preaching what Chelaship meant, and what are the consequences of selfishness and temerity. Each candidate was warned that he must wait for years in any event, before his fitness could be proven, and that he must pass through a series of tests that would bring out all there was in him, whether bad or good. They were nearly all married men and hence were designated "Lay Chelas"—a term new in English, but having long had its equivalent in Asiatic tongues. A Lay Chela is but a man of the world who affirms his desire to become wise in spiritual things. Virtually, every member of the Theosophical Society who subscribes to the second of our three "Declared Objects" is such; for though not of the number of true Chelas, he has yet the possibility of becoming one, for he has stepped across the boundary-line which separated him from the Mahatmas, and has brought himself, as it were, under their notice. In joining the Society and binding himself to help along its work, he has pledged himself to act in some degree in concert with those Mahatmas, at whose behest the Society was organized, and under whose conditional protection it remains. The joining is then, the introduction; all the rest depends entirely upon the member himself, and he need never expect the most distant approach to the "favor" of one of our Mahatmas, or any other Mahatmas in the world—should the latter consent to become known—that has not been fully earned by personal merit. The *Mahatmas are the servants, not the arbiters of the Law of Karma.* LAY-CHELASHIP CONFERS NO PRIVILEGE UPON ANY ONE EXCEPT THAT OF WORKING FOR MERIT UNDER THE OBSERVATION OF A MASTER. And whether that Master be or be not seen by the Chela makes no difference whatever as to the result: his good thoughts, words and deeds will bear their fruits, his evil ones, theirs. To boast of Lay Chelaship or make a parade of it, is the surest way to reduce the rela-

tionship with the Guru to a mere empty name, for it would be *primâ facie* evidence of vanity and unfitness for farther progress. And for years we have been teaching everywhere the maxim "First deserve, then desire" intimacy with the Mahatmas.

Now there is a terrible law operative in nature, one which cannot be altered and whose operation clears up the apparent mystery of the selection of certain "Chelas" who have turned out sorry specimens of morality, these few years past. Does the reader recall the old proverb, "Let sleeping dogs lie"? There is a world of occult meaning in it. No man or woman knows his or her moral strength until it is *tried.* Thousands go through life very respectably, because they were never put to the pinch. This is a truism doubtless, but it is most pertinent to the present case. One who undertakes to try for Chelaship by that very act rouses and lashes to desperation every sleeping passion of his animal nature. For this is the commencement of a struggle for the mastery in which quarter is neither to be given nor taken. It is, once for all, "To be, or Not to be"; to conquer, means ADEPTSHIP; to fail an ignoble Martyrdom; for to fall victim to lust, pride, avarice, vanity, selfishness, cowardice, or any other of the lower propensities, is indeed ignoble, if measured by the standard of true manhood. The Chela is not only called to face all latent evil propensities of his nature, but, in addition, the whole volume of maleficent power accumulated by the community and nation to which he belongs. For he is an integral part of those aggregates, and what affects either the individual man, or the group (town or nation) reacts upon the other. And in this instance his struggle for goodness jars upon the whole body of badness in his environment, and draws its fury upon him. If he is content to go along with his neighbours and be almost as they are—perhaps a little better or somewhat worse than the average—no one may give him a thought. But let it be known that he has been able to detect the hollow mockery of social life, its hypocrisy, selfishness, sensuality, cupidity and other bad features, and has determined to lift himself up to a higher level, at once he is hated, and every bad, or bigoted, or malicious nature sends at his a current of opposing will power. If he is innately strong he shakes it off, as the powerful swimmer dashes through the current that would bear a weaker one away. But in this moral battle, if the Chela has one single hidden blemish—do what he may, it *shall* and *will* be brought to light. The varnish of conventionalities which "civilization" overlays us all with must come off to the last coat, and the Inner Self,

naked and without the slightest veil to conceal its reality, is exposed. The habits of society which hold men to a certain degree under moral restraint, and compel them to pay tribute to virtue by seeming to be good whether they are so or not, these habits are apt to be all forgotten, these restraints to be all broken through under the strain of chelaship. He is now in an atmosphere of illusions—*Maya.* Vice puts on its most alluring face, and the tempting passions try to lure the inexperienced aspirant to the depths of psychic debasement. This is not a case like that depicted by a great artist, where Satan is seen playing a game of chess with a man upon the stake of his soul, while the latter's good angel stands beside him to counsel and assist. For the strife is in this instance between the Chela's Will and his carnal nature, and Karma forbids that any angel or Guru should interfere until the result is known. With the vividness of poetic fancy Bulwer Lytton has idealised it for us in his *Zanoni,* a work which will ever be prized by the occultist; while in his *Strange Story* he has with equal power shown the black side of occult research and its deadly perils. Chelaship was defined, the other day, by a Mahatma as a "psychic resolvent, which eats away all dross and leaves only the pure gold behind." If the candidate has the latent lust for money, or political chicanery, or materialistic septicism, or vain display, or false speaking, or cruelty, or sensual gratification of any kind, the germ is almost sure to sprout; and so, on the other hand, as regards the noble qualities of human nature. The real man comes out. Is it not the height of folly, then, for any one to leave the smooth path of common-place life to scale the crags of chelaship without some reasonable feeling of certainty that he has the right stuff in him? Well says the Bible: "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall"—a text that would-be Chelas should consider well before they rush headlong into the fray! It would have been well for some of our Lay-Chelas if they had thought twice before defying the tests. *We call to mind several sad failures within a twelvemonth.* One went bad in the head, recanted noble sentiments uttered but a few weeks previously, and became a member of a religion he had just scornfully and unanswerably proven false. A second became a defaulter and absconded with his employer's money—the latter also a Theosophist. A third gave himself up to gross debauchery, and confessed it with ineffectual sobs and tears, to his chosen Guru. A fourth got entangled with a person of the other sex and fell out with his dearest and truest friends. A fifth showed signs of mental aberration and was brought into Court upon charges

of discreditable conduct. A sixth shot himself to escape the consequences of criminality, on the verge of detection! And so we might go on and on. All these were apparently sincere searchers after truth, and passed in the world for respectable persons. Externally, they were fairly eligible as candidates for Chelaship, as appearances go; but "within all was rottenness and dead men's bones." The world's varnish was so thick as to hide the absence of the true gold underneath; and the "resolvent" doing its work, the candidate proved in each instance but a gilded figure of moral dross, from circumference to core. . . .

In what precedes we have, of course, dealt but with the failures among Lay-Chelas; there have been partial successes too, and these are passing gradually through the first stages of their probation. Some are making themselves useful to the Society and to the world in general by good example and precept. If they persist, well for them, well for us all: the odds are fearfully against them, but still "there is no impossibility to him who WILLS." The difficulties in Chelaship will never be less until human nature changes and a new sort is evolved. St. Paul (Rom. vii, 18, 19) might have had a Chela in mind when he said "to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." And in the wise Kirátárjuniya of Bharávi it is written:—

> "The enemies which rise within the body,
> Hard to be overcome—the evil passions—
> Should manfully be fought; *who conquers these*
> *Is equal to the conqueror of worlds.*" (XI, 32.)

If a man would follow in the steps of Hermetic philosophers he must be ready for everlasting encounters with friends and foes. He must part, once for all, with every remembrance of his earlier ideas, on all and on everything. Existing religions, knowledge, science, must rebecome a blank book for him, as in the days of his boyhood, for if he wants to succeed he must learn a new alphabet on the lap of Mother Nature, every letter of which will afford a new insight to him, every syllable and word an unexpected revelation. The two hitherto irreconcilable foes, science and theology—the Montecchi and Capuletti of the nineteenth century—will ally themselves with the ignorant masses against the modern Occultist. To science it will be the duty —arid and sterile as a matter of course—of the Kabalist to prove that

from the beginning of time there was but one positive science—Occultism; that it was the mysterious lever of all intellectual forces, the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil of the allegorical Paradise, from whose gigantic trunk sprang in every direction boughs, branches and twigs, the former shooting forth straight enough at first, the latter deviating with every inch of growth, assuming more and more fantastical appearances, till at last one after the other lost its vital juice, got deformed, and, drying up, finally broke off, scattering the ground afar with heaps of rubbish. Furthermore, the Occultist will have to prove to Christian theology, publicly, what many of its priesthood are well aware of in secret, namely, that their God on earth was a Kabalist, the meek representative of a tremendous Power.

Who Are We, Really?

We knowers are unknown to ourselves, and for a good reason: how can we ever hope to find what we have never looked for? There is a sound adage which runs: "Where a man's treasure lies, there lies his heart." Our treasure lies in the beehives of our knowledge. We are perpetually on our way thither, being by nature winged insects and honey gatherers of the mind. The only thing that lies close to our heart is the desire to bring something home to the hive. As for the rest of life—so-called "experience"—who among us is serious enough for that? Or has time enough? When it comes to such matters, our heart is simply not in it—we don't even lend our ear. Rather, as a man divinely abstracted and self-absorbed into whose ears the bell has just drummed the twelve strokes of noon will suddenly awake with a start and ask himself what hour has actually struck, we sometimes rub our ears after the event and ask ourselves, astonished and at a loss. The sad truth is that we remain necessarily strangers to ourselves, we don't understand our own substance, we *must* mistake ourselves; . . .

—Friedrich Nietzsche

MAHATMAS AND CHELAS

A MAHATMA is a personage, who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge, which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of reincarnations during the process of cosmic evolution, provided, of course, that they do not go, in the meanwhile, against the purposes of Nature and thus bring on their own annihilation. This process of the self-evolution of the MAHATMA extends over a number of "incarnations," although, comparatively speaking, they are very few. Now, what is it that incarnates? The occult doctrine, so far as it is given out, shows that the first three principles die more or less with what is called the physical death. The fourth principle, together with the lower portions of the fifth, in which reside the animal propensities, has *Kama Loka* for its abode, where it suffers the throes of disintegration in proportion to the intensity of those lower desires; while it is the higher *Manas, the pure man,* which is associated with the sixth and the seventh principles, that goes into *Devachan* to enjoy there the effects of its good *Karma,* and then to be reincarnated as a higher individuality. Now, an entity, that is passing through the occult training in its successive births, gradually has less and less (in each incarnation) of that lower *Manas* until there arrives a time when its *whole Manas,* being of an entirely elevated character, is centered in the higher individuality, when such a person may be said to have become a MAHATMA. At the time of his physical death, all the lower four principles perish without any suffering, for these are, in fact, to him like a piece of wearing apparel which he puts on and off at will. The real MAHATMA is then not his physical body but that higher *Manas* which is inseparably linked to the *Atma* and its vehicle (the sixth principle)—a union effected by him in a comparatively very short period by passing through the process of self-evolution laid down by the Occult Philosophy. When, therefore, people express a desire to "see a MAHATMA," they really do not seem to understand what it is they ask for. How can they, by their physical eyes, hope to see that which *transcends* that sight? Is it the body—a mere shell or mask—they crave or hunt after? And supposing they see the body of a MAHATMA, how can they

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know that behind that mask is concealed an exalted entity? By what standard are they to judge whether the *Maya* before them reflects the image of a true MAHATMA or not? And who will say that the physical is not a *Maya?* Higher things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things. And whoever therefore wants to see the real MAHATMA, must use his *intellectual* sight. He must elevate his *Manas* that its perception will be clear and all mists created by *Maya* must be dispelled. His vision will then be bright and he will see the MAHATMAS wherever he may be, for, being merged into the sixth and the seventh principles which are ubiquitous and omnipresent, the MAHATMAS may be said to be everywhere. But, at the same time, just as we may be standing on a mountain top and have within our sight the whole plain, and yet not be cognisant of any particular tree or spot, because from that elevated position all below is nearly identical, and as our attention may be drawn to something which may be dissimilar to its surroundings—so in the same manner, although the whole of humanity is within the mental vision of the MAHATMAS, they cannot be expected to take special note of every human being, unless that being by his special acts draws their particular attention to himself. The highest interest of humanity, as a whole, is their special concern, for they have identified themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and he, who would draw their attention, must do so through that Soul which pervades everywhere. This perception of the *Manas* may be called "faith" which should not be confounded with *blind belief.* "Blind faith" is an expression sometimes used to indicate belief without perception or understanding; while the true perception of the *Manas* is that enlightened belief, which is the real meaning of the word "faith." This belief should at the same time be accompanied by *knowledge, i.e.,* experience, for "true *knowledge* brings with it faith." Faith is the perception of the *Manas* (the fifth principle), while knowledge, in the true sense of the term, is the capacity of the Intellect, *i.e.,* it is spiritual perception. In short, the higher individuality of man, composed of his higher *Manas,* the sixth and the seventh principles, should work as a unity, and then only can it obtain "divine wisdom," for divine things can be sensed only by divine faculties. Thus the desire, which should prompt one to apply for *chelaship,* is to so far understand the operations of the Law of Cosmic Evolution as will enable him to work in harmonious accord with Nature, instead of going against its purposes through ignorance.

NOTES ON THE TAO TE KING

THE *Tao Te King,* insofar as its passages assert an Ultimate Reality beyond even the range of the highest metaphysical speculation, can be said to have a "mystical" tone. But the *Tao Te King* is also a dissertation on the implications which a realization of Tao has for ethics and human conduct. The numerous paradoxes enunciated are devices, albeit the only proper instrumentalities, for illustrating the subtlety involved in blending mysticism and ethical philosophy. In the Lionel Giles' rendition, we find these passages:

> Profound Virtue is unfathomable, far-reaching, paradoxical at first, but afterwards exhibiting thorough conformity with Nature.
>
> Perfect Virtue acquires nothing; therefore it obtains everything. Perfect Virtue does nothing, yet there is nothing which it does not effect. Perfect Charity operates without the need of anything to evoke it. Perfect Duty to one's neighbor operates, but always needs to be evoked. Perfect Ceremony operates, and calls for no outward response; nevertheless it induces respect.

The true mystic, in other words, strives to become impartial in judgment through communion with that in nature and in man which is One. This is "conformity with Nature," for Nature neither praises nor blames; her essential rhythms are unaffected by specific happenings; she does not cling, in any final sense, to any particular expression or manifestation.

Chuangtse, a philosopher of Laotse's period and the first of the notable commentators upon Laotse's points of emphases, expresses the manner in which an impersonal "nature philosophy" can affect a man's attitude toward life from day to day:

> Lao Tan (Laotse) says, "Be aware of the male, but keep to the female and be the (hollow) valley of the earth. Be aware of the white, but keep to the tarnished, and be the ravine of the world." "Others reach for the first place; I take the last." Again he says, "Receive unto yourself the calumny of the world. Others strive for the substance, I rather choose the passive void." "Because one does not hoard, one has abundance, indeed great is his abundance." His way of life is slow and easy and not wasteful of energy; he believed in doing nothing and laughed at those who do things. Others pray for good luck, he alone was content with being wronged, saying, "Thus may I hope to be free from reproach." He believed in depth for one's

> foundation, and simplicity as the main teaching of conduct. He says, "The hard will break, and the sharp-edged will be blunted. Be tolerant of all and you will not be hurt." Such teachings may be considered indeed the height of all knowledge.

An attempt to study Chuangtse, who is regarded by many scholars as a true collaborator with Laotse, reveals the fact that the source of the *Tao Te King* cannot be said of a certainty to be a single person. There is even some question as to whether "Laotse" was not a name adopted by a number of mystics to express a current of thought—and one may recall the many suggestions by H. P. Blavatsky that Jesus of Nazareth may not have been an actual historical figure. The important thing, though, in connection with such questions of "historical reality," is that the basic message remains the same.

Authorship is not important in respect to the *Tao Te King,* any more than it is in respect to the person or persons who first put the Cantos of the *Dhammapada* into written form. An introduction to a recent translation of the *Tao Te King* by Professor R. B. Blakney makes some interesting comments on this point—leading finally to what seems a true theosophic interpretation of sacred scripture, its origin and nature. What matter the names of Masters of Wisdom? Their eternal presence, however, matters a great deal, for to sense it is to sense the presence of an incorporeal ladder reaching from our finite lives to infinite potentialities of perception.

Confucius, as we have remarked before, can in no sense be considered a mystic. He was, at least in some measure, concerned with his own identity and with his particular formulations of ideas. Laotse, on the other hand, not only did not express such concern, but was quite content to be identified with others who philosophized about the Tao. The true mystic never sets himself up with status, even as a stimulating thinker. He does not *study* mysticism, because his attitude is the only embodiment of it which he may know with surety. Professor Blakney writes:

> The identity of China's mystics is complicated by the rule that no true mystic would know himself to be such. He could no more discuss mysticism at arm's length, so to speak, than the Bible could discuss religion objectively. Christ, for example, does not mention religion; he *is* religious and all he does and says is therefore religious, but not self-consciously so. We may be quite sure that the greatest of mystics knew nothing of mysticism. "If anyone wishes to walk in my footsteps, let him renounce self. . . ." (Mark 8:34.) The renun-

ciation of self requires, among other things, that one learn to disregard his personal identity, to lose it in unself-conscious devotion to the object of his quest. This is the first rule of mysticism.

This, of course, is bound to lead to an unsatisfactory result for people interested in the biological details of mystic authors. Generally speaking, in their concern for the subject of their lives, mystics neglect to mention themselves. We do not know who composed the chapters of the *Tao Te Ching*. The authorship of many another kind of writing is lost by accident; but mysticism is often given anonymously, by principle.

The remarkable unanimity of the great mystics of China, India, Persia, the Holy Lands and Europe, is one of the truly impressive facts of the spiritual history of the human race. We may believe that this unanimity is due to personal causes. Generally, the great ones have begun with a deep skepticism about popular or traditional religion and man's power to influence God or the gods. Their insights have been derived from an overwhelming experience of a reality beyond themselves rather than a postulate. They have matured with moral growth rather than intellectual effort. They are usually skilled thinkers, but when they have offered explanations, the explanation is clearly a by-product, rather than an object in itself.

Wherever the great mysticism has come, it has offered to replace popular or local religion with a new and universal allegiance. Folk beliefs about gods and spirits give place to a metaphysic of the utmost generality for those who can rise to it. The mystic's passion is satisfied only with the sense of the Ultimate Reality, the God, Godhead or Godness that is back of the world of mind and nature. What is the Ultimate like? And what has it to do with man? The mystic report is that:

Reality, however designated, is One; it is an all-embracing unity from which nothing can be separated.

This concentration on the "inwardness" of life and destiny leads inevitably to impatience with ceremony. In one of the many passages wherein Laotse criticizes devotions of a public nature, we find the following: "Ceremonies are but the veneer of loyalty and good faith, while oft-times the source of disorder. Knowledge of externals is but a showy ornament of Tao, while oft-times the beginning of imbecility."

Here we find a clear correlation with similar passages from the *Dhammapada*:

He is not a Bhikku because he carries the begging bowl. Nor even because he adopts the whole law outwardly.

He is not a Muni simply because he is silent; he may be foolish and ignorant. He who weighs in the scale of understanding, accepting

> the good and rejecting the evil, he is wise: for that reason he is wise. He who in silence reflects on the inner and the outer, he is to be called a Muni.
>
> Not only by discipline of moral principles, nor only by resolutions and vows; not only by much study, nor even by attainment in meditation, or in seclusion and solitude, do I release myself from bondage.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* is a more positive assertion of the same principle, as Krishna describes the nature of that impersonal, impartial state of mind which must be sought by the disciple. The self can only be raised by the Self. The outward trappings of virtue or holiness are no more than temporary garments—they are not the inner man, and cannot warm him if there is insufficient generation of warmth from within. Krishna speaks:

> When he hath renounced all intentions and is devoid of attachment to action in regard to objects of sense, then he is called one who hath ascended to meditation. He should raise the self by the Self; let him not suffer the Self to be lowered; for Self is the friend of self, and in like manner, self is its own enemy. Self is the friend of the man who is self-conquered; so self like a foe hath enmity to him who is not self-conquered. The Self of the man who is self-subdued and free from desire and anger is intent on the Supreme Self in heat and cold, in pain and pleasure, in honor and ignominy. The man who hath spiritual knowledge and discernment, who standeth upon the pinnacle, and hath subdued the senses, to whom gold and stone are the same, is said to be devoted. And he is esteemed among all who, whether amongst his friends and companions, in the midst of enemies or those who stand aloof or remain neutral, with those who love and those who hate, and in the company of sinners or the righteous, is of equal mind.

While the *Bhagavad-Gita* is a direct call to the awakening of self-reliance—often a strong exhortation—the verses of the *Tao Te King* proceed toward the same end by indirection, for, though "the Great Way is very smooth, the people love the by-paths." The author or authors of the *Tao Te King* stop short of zealous exhortation. The persuasiveness of Tao as a moral principle is only the perception which comes from a devotee's realization that most of that which men strive for is *not the Tao*. Further, though "the Sage adheres to his obligation, he does not expect fulfillment from others." Yet, we must remember that in the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna represents himself, primarily, as Arjuna's own Higher Self. From this source much exhortation is needed.

FREENESS

HUMBLE thyself, little man. The learning thou displayest is great, is in truth noteworthy; thy arrogance, unseemly.

From inconceivably ancient times the Sages of the Secret Science *knew,* and, save in naturally ordained cycles of revealment, learned to cherish the boon which was theirs. Says Krishna. ". . . among the wise of secret knowledge I am their silence."

Thou art slave to memory, little man; fearful to forget. Dost suppose the Sage stores knowledge concretely, as in a vast memorizing vault of brain matter?—and is burdened (as Atlas with the world's weight) under strain of necessity to hold distinct and separate each minutely detailed parcel of wisdom lest positions shift, and a misleading mass cast doubt-raising shadows to become an avoidable source of confusion? The Sage has no memory, though he *learns by heart*—gets at the heart of a matter, penetrates to the kernel within the observable, definable, deceptive husk. Says Krishna, ". . . from me come memory, knowledge, and also the loss of both."

Cosmogenesis, Cosmic Evolution, the Evolution of Symbolism, Anthropogenesis, and Archaic Symbolism in World-Religions—this is what the Sages know. H. P. Blavatsky describes the rationale of their knowledge:

> The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system. . . . Such is the mysterious power of Occult Symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain, in the bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all recorded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form. . . . This system of ancient cosmogony is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one early race to another, of the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity. . . . for long ages, the "Wise Men" of the Fifth Race, of the stock saved and rescued from the last cataclysm and shifting of continents, had passed their lives *in learning, not teaching.* How did they do so? . . . by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions

> of great adepts; *i.e.,* men who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions—so obtained as to stand as independent evidence—of other adepts, and by centuries of experience. (*S.D.* I, 272-3.)

Learn to "look into the soul of things"; to see the occult significance of an incident, for the workings of Karma are both hidden and manifest, the invisible cause and the apparent effect. By striving, "increase your faith" in the omnipresent Reality; in That which contains all and everything, and is as impersonal as boundless Space. Impersonality leaves no room for arrogance. How else shall the proud be humbled, and the humble made great, save through the Law which is no respecter of "persons"? The Spiritual Fire burning in the heart of man levels all barriers to Brotherhood as its counterpart on earth sweeps before it the giant of the forest and the baneful weed.

It hath been said, "The pure in heart see God." But, O little man, be not thou attached to purity. The *attachment* will "draw thee down" and hold thee back. Nor wilt thou readily recognize the bonds of *sattvic* enslavement which are with difficulty discerned: a silken cord binds, manacles of gold hold one fast.

The Sage is not "virtuous"; he is not concerned with virtue, nor distressed by vice. The inquisitive traveller tries to get insight into the manners, customs, laws, and government of the countries he visits. The steadfast Pilgrim on Wisdom's pathway penetrates the mysteries of vice and virtue—the great pair of opposites, Good and Evil—and rises above them. Virtue is no springboard to Wisdom. *Attachment* to virtue breeds smugness, self-righteousness; and increases the already present tendency to seek out vice in others. The highest virtue is yet but one of a pair of opposites. Be not deluded by virtue, little man. The Universe (with everything in it) is called *Maya,* because all is temporary therein. The Sage "holds to that which has neither substance nor existence," to That which "upon the dissolution of all things else is not destroyed," for it is of *another nature* from the visible.

Arjuna, acknowledging his perception that the Sage likewise has *another nature,* asked the questions: "What are the characteristic marks by which the man may be known, O Master, who hath surpassed the qualities? What is his course of life, and what are the means by which he overcometh the qualities?" Krishna replied:

> He, O son of Pandu, who doth not hate these qualities—illumination, action, delusion—when they appear, nor longeth for them when they disappear; who, like one who is of no party, sitteth as one unconcerned about the three qualities and undisturbed by them, who being persuaded that the qualities exist, is moved not by them; who is of equal mind in pain and pleasure, self-centered, to whom a lump of earth, a stone, or gold are as one; who is of equal mind with those who love or dislike, constant, the same whether blamed or praised; equally minded in honor or disgrace, and the same toward friendly or unfriendly side, engaging only in necessary actions, such an one hath surmounted the qualities. And he, my servant, who worships me with exclusive devotion, having completely overcome the qualities, is fitted to be absorbed in Brahma the Supreme. (*The Bhagavad-Gita.*)

The sage Patanjali calls this state "Emancipation"—when the qualities have ceased to be mistaken by the soul for realities, and the consequence is that the soul abides in *its own nature,* unaffected by the great "pairs of opposites."

There is another state of being free, of which *The Secret Doctrine* speaks: "Many are those among the Spiritual Entities, who have incarnated bodily in man, since the beginning of his appearance, and who, for all that, still exist as independently as they did before, in the infinitudes of Space . . ."

What hast thou to do with so much knowledge as this?

INVIOLABILITY OF SELF

There can be no philosophy or science of unique individuals or events. They have simply to be accepted. They are irrationals. Reason can not deal with them. For what do we mean by rational? We mean that which is reducible to a principle, a rule or order; an entity which refuses submission to any law or principle is irrational, and lies altogether outside the province of our poor, groping understandings. In brief, such an entity is just itself and a law to itself.

—W. MACNEILE DIXON

SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS

Cycles of Destiny

[The short articles comprising this series are derived from characteristic talks given during the years 1915-35. As often as practicable, the words of the speaker have been used without change, in the hope of conveying some of the force originally imparted to the ideas. The present article is comprised of extracts from a talk given December 29, 1926.—Editors.]

"THEOSOPHY," said Madame Blavatsky, "is the gospel of the rational explanation of things as they are." In order to arrive at this explanation, Theosophy goes beyond all differences, back of all contradictions, to something in nature which is one, and not many; and which, *being One,* is common to all things—whether those things are good or evil, high or low in the scale of evolution.

Let us try to see what this something-in-common is. In its simplest terms, this fundamental characteristic is the power to give expressions and receive impressions. No element, even in inorganic nature, can be touched by us without our at once receiving an impression from the contact. Yet, no impression could be made upon us unless it were an expression of something in the elements. If we go beyond the elements, to what to us is immaterial nature, or the field of forces, organized and unorganized, the same thing is true. We find, if we think about it, that *we are in contact with energy.* Every impression we receive is an expression of the field of force of that object.

So much for our objective contact with fields of energy, or force. What of our subjective experience with fields of energy? Here we find the same thing to be true: No mind can contact another mind without getting impressions from that mind, and without making impressions on that mind. It is this great duality everywhere present in nature —that is, the power to give expression to what is in us and to react to the impressions received from what is inherent in beings outside ourselves—that is meant in theosophical language by the word "Karma." "Cycles of Destiny" is but a borrowed phrase: what we are talking about is *Karma.* Not Karma as a doctrine nor as dogma; not Karma as a theory nor even as a fact; but Karma as the palpitating *actuality* of every motion of our existence.

Now, taking that as a generalization—that this Power is common to all things and beings, and therefore resident in each—we are prepared to get a rational meaning of the word "Spirit." *Spirit* means that Power which is absent from nothing and which is present in everything. Throughout the books of all the great religions, this Spirit is always spoken of as omnipresent. It could not be omnipresent unless it were just as common to an atom, to a mountain, to a flower, as to the sun or a Divine Being. Spirit means, then, the Life, or the Consciousness, or the Power, which is in all things; which pervades all things, which includes all things, and which, therefore, fundamentally, *is* all things. *This* is what is called the First Fundamental Proposition of Theosophy.

Power, however, may be either manifested or unmanifested. If unmanifested, the Power is nonetheless real; for, though the power of manifestation is latent, it is inherent in the Life. The moment there is manifestation of Life, there is duality; and it is this duality which is meant by the word "Cycle."

Most Theosophists, being children of their generation, are of necessity inclined to regard Karma much as a Christian regards God: that is, as a Force extraneous to themselves, which anon brings to them that which is welcome or unwelcome, and anon takes it away. Now, whether we say Law, or whether we say Karma, or whether we say Force, or whether we say Being—the idea is the same; and this idea is totally false. Nothing in the universe, but has the same *power* of action as "God"; it is the range of its exercise, the manifestation of the Power that varies.

Thus the duality of Life is expressed by two principles—or rather by one principle flowing in two directions. The principle of action, or Karma, or manifestation, in its outward flow from any being, or set of beings, as a center, travels out through Life and back again. So initial existence is not a being; *it is a flow of force from subject to object.* Thus we have the two principles which underlie all manifested existence: the principle which acts and the principle which is acted upon—in other words, Spirit and Matter. Spirit is always the basis of action; Matter is always that which is acted upon.

So the cycle of Karma, or the cycle of destiny, should be approached, first, from the standpoint that Life is the One Reality—the Power to manifest—and that it is common to all things, and that everything is fundamentally identical with it. Next, that the moment there is mani-

festation or action, whether in the whole of Life or any portion of it, at once there is duality. Spirit has not *ceased;* it has merely created a metaphysical separation of perceiver and perceived, of subject and object, in itself. So, then, the cycle of destiny is actually, first, descent from the Absolute state (which we may call Spirit, if we will) to that state which we call Matter, and then a reascent from the state called Matter, once more to the Absolute state or condition. This is the cycle of destiny for everything that is. There is no being so high that he can avoid the cycle of destiny. So we can see that "the cycle of destiny" simply means the *cycle of manifestation.*

The first object of the Theosophical Society was to establish in a man's mind and heart a perception and conviction *of his own* that Spirit is common to all; that there is nothing which is non-spiritual; nothing which is dead; nothing which is fixed and without the capacity to evolve; but that everything is Life and Consciousness; that everything is under Law, and has the same power to act and react. From this perception of the common source of all, comes the psychic apperception of the brotherhood of the whole of nature.

It stands to reason, then, that we are just half-way through the cycle of destiny as an order of being, because we have descended from the plane of Spirit, or Universal Self-Consciousness, to that point where our Self-consciousness is regained individually—that is what constitutes Man. *Now* the problem, the other half of the cycle of destiny, is to return to the primeval condition with Universal Consciousness *individually embodied.* To reach that condition means to retain our Godhood, no matter which one of the stages of evolutionary ascent we may occupy; to retain our Universal Consciousness no matter what stage of evolutionary descent we may be occupying. That this is possible to man is really the key-note, the heart-felt utterance of every great Teacher who ever lived.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

ARE there any distinctions, other than those of simplification, between the "Three Truths" of Theosophy School and H.P.B.'s Three Fundamental Propositions? If so, what are they?

The frequent tendency among ULT students is to assume that H.P.B.'s fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* may be equated, one for one, with the Three Truths given in the *Eternal Verities.* The substantiation of this statement is easily made in ULT study classes, where frequent substitution of the terminology and conceptions of the *Verities* for those of the *S.D.* is found in presentation of the fundamentals.

A comparison of the language utilized in both basic references reveals some differences, though. While the *Verities* makes ample use of word-pictures and memory verses, well suited to easy retention by the child's mind, the *S.D.'s* abstruse language is one of intellectual subtlety, utilizing metaphysical terminology. Its ideas do not readily reveal themselves on the first reading, or even, perhaps, on the tenth.

Under the stress of public presentation, "word-pictures" and often repeated phrases provide a welcome pathway of oversimplification, as well as a smooth and coherent presentation. Conversely, an attempt to reformulate Madame Blavatsky's conceptions, and at the same time embody all the ideas presented in the original, gives ample reason to stop, perhaps embarassingly, and think.

In addition to differences of language, distinctions of approach and content among the Three Truths as formulated in the *Eternal Verities* and the *Friendly Philosopher,* and the Fundamentals of the *S.D.,* present themselves. The *Verities'* interpretations of Consciousness or God, the One Life, the Self, as the subject-matter of the First Truth (or the First Fundamental) are in contrast to the dual formulations of Consciousness and Matter as the primeval aspects of the observable manifested universe. "God," or Consciousness, is compared to Space or Matter, yet the two are distinct and separate aspects of reality—which must be *consciously* united. No reconciliation can take place if their *dual* nature is not originally understood. Experience is neither completely subjective nor completely objective, but represents some balance based on the individual's familiarity (or identification) with its component parts.

Perhaps an even more important distinction is that made by Madame Blavatsky between these dual aspects, as conceived by the finite being, and the Absolute itself; namely, the subtle differentiation between the First Cause and the Causeless Cause. Yet this distinction is important to all that follows. Once its existence has been postulated, it may be laid aside, yet by its very presence it provides the finishing touch to the rest of the logical framework. "So the words that describe it the least are the best words for our minds," states the *Verities.*

Is the Second Fundamental itself a statement, in more complex terms, that "this is a universe of law"? Actually the *S.D.* affirms the periodic nature of the universe's manifestations, bar none. The existence of Law, however, as an underlying concept, is implicit in every one of the Fundamentals and should not be so "localized" in respect to the "Three Truths." It is introduced on the first page of *The Secret Doctrine's* Preface when H.P.B. categorizes the ideas therein as "esoteric science." The conception of universal law, then, belongs also to the First and Third Fundamentals. Without the acceptance of law, *i.e.,* the predictability of phenomena once the significant variables are isolated and correlated, no basis for science exists, and an attempt to logically explain the workings of the universe could not be ventured.

The Second Truth also deals with Karma, the law of ethical causation and dynamic equilibrium maintained in the universe. On the other hand, Madame Blavatsky specifically leaves out all reference to the interaction of individual entities. The conceptions of motive and causality and their relationships to the periodic manifestations of the universe are left for treatment in the Third Fundamental.

The Third Truth appears to follow rather closely the ideas presented in its counterpart Fundamental. However, its formulation tends to lead easily to stereotyped thinking. There is a subtle difference between the analogy of the Ladder of Being and the infinite gradations of intelligence and consciousness postulated in the Fundamental.

The *Verities'* conceptions, then, when presented by the adult, provide a rather easy crutch. At the same time, one might argue that they are quite effective on a child's level. Immediately one may ask what the proper age should be for a transition to the Fundamentals, or is a transition necessary at all? The question arises: Why provide the child with blanket conceptions of "truth" when he is least able to evaluate them? Is the purpose of the child's early training to firmly

implant in his mind the basic verities of the world he lives in? Perhaps. But if these ideas are true, he'll discover them in his own unique manner, provided he has been given the tools of critical thought and evaluation to start with. The resultant conclusions arrived at will in truth be "realities," as they will become internalized by the individual's own effort.

The written word is but an approximation of the conceptions within the mind of man. When read by another, it undergoes a similar conceptualization, the corollary process to that undergone by the writer. By this very act of communication, the idea in the mind of the receiver is by necessity only an approximation of the writer's idea. The more interpreters there are between the original idea and its final expression, the greater the distortion of communication may be. In any case, the final reader only makes full sense out of the writing to the extent that he has a similar background of experiences and fundamental conceptions. In other words, a verbal familiarity with the teachings is necessary before the teacher (or child) can hope to obtain much meaning from the passage being studied. Therefore, why make the effort to simplify at all, if the final reader must experience the same realizations as the interpreter in order to fully understand his interpretation?

A limitation, then, exists—not a fault in the *Eternal Verities,* or in any other interpretation of the teachings by individual or by group. It lies in the fact that formalization may be a step in the alienation of a student's ability to think for himself.

What is important is what the individual can best utilize and work with at this particular stage of awareness, and that those presentations of ideas lead him on, rather than "stop" him. The impressions and ideas one obtains through the *Verities* perhaps afford the young a sense for the fitness of things, a calmness about life that is acknowledged and much needed in his growing nature. The *S.D.* fundamentals urge him on to further thought and probing.

These more philosophical, abstract considerations which one encounters with more intellectual agility do not invalidate the previously easily formulated and accepted conceptions; they go beyond and encompass more of life's intricacies, projecting a more complete picture. But recognition of basic ideas does not come from the word, but rather from an increasing awareness of new horizons.

THE IRREVOCABILITY OF KARMA

> The life of the superior whole requires the death of the inferior, the death of the parts depending on and being subservient to it. And, as life is death, so death is life, and the whole great cycle of lives form but ONE EXISTENCE—the worst day of which is on our planet.

THERE is a wide distinction between predestination, which bears the sense of finality, and predetermination—connoting, as it does, action or actions which will inevitably result in reciprocal or counteractive influence, regardless, one might say, of "time" as we know it. We are constantly *predetermining* our lives, for good or ill, for weal or woe. Ignorant of the Law, of the inexorable justice of Karma, we rejoice at *our* "good luck" or weep at *our* misfortunes—remaining the while chained to our previous actions, as we "whirl upon the wheel of life."

The unbroken continuity of life eludes us so long as we tend to view and interpret life in segments. The profound mystery of life will ever deepen if we mistake the pulsing web of life for a fixed creation. Lightly tap a pencil on a table, the vibration carries, or is transmitted, to the outermost confines of space. So, too, speak a word—it becomes verily a "winged messenger." None would think to recall the vibration sent forth by the inanimate object, yet how ardently have we sometimes wished to un-say a word! *The Voice of the Silence* cautions:

> E'en wasted smoke remains not traceless.
> "A harsh word uttered in past lives is not
> destroyed, but ever comes again."

No efforts, not the smallest—whether in right or wrong direction—can vanish from the world of causes.

A decision is made, and almost at once we change our minds, but there is no complete turning back as though it had never been—or, rather, the "turning back" may occupy years. By the time the mind was "changed," the original decision had communicated itself. Shall we, then, repent and repine? Or shall we learn control of speech; better still, control of thought? This is a form of sacrifice.

The personality (a form with a name) with its separative tendencies of *me* and *mine*—the barriers holding back the free movement of the reciprocal Force in nature—must be made the sacrificial victim: "The life of the superior whole requires the death of the inferior. . . ."

MORAL QUESTIONS

IN the midst of prophecies of doom the only hope for man is *in* man. We have to seek for the light that comes from within. There is no other way to achieve that inner reorientation which brings enlightenment or "salvation." We may consult with others, search the scriptures, or listen to advice (usually not hard to find in overabundance), but the final evaluations and decisions in regard to anything have to be made by and within ourselves. Even if the best decision in regard to a question is to refuse to make or accept any finality, to remain open-minded and not be self-deceived or dogmatic, it is we who have to decide these things. Others cannot rightfully do our thinking for us, nor would we be any better off if they could. Such is the law of soul evolution. To live a higher life demands it. Such also is the responsibility we have to ourselves and others.

Whatever difficulty any problem may present, the source of wisdom and strength can be found nowhere else than within. Regeneration is worked from within. The ability to be of any real help to others, and not a mere follower or time server, lies in that direction. Wise humanitarians exemplify this law just as surely as the evils of totalitarianism and dictatorships amply demonstrate the folly of any other course.

There are a number of vital factors in consideration of these questions. Duality of nature lies within. The personal self constitutes man's lower nature. Therein lie the snares and self-deceptions. Often this is learned only by bitter experience. The impersonal One Self of all is that in which the higher nature of man is rooted. That is truly declared to be the light of all lights beyond the darkness of ignorance. Nowhere but in the Supreme can we place full and enduring confidence.

From the many variations of delusion arise countless evils and suffering in the world. Passion is the enemy of man, not the other fellow, race or nation. The utter folly of man's destructive ways is not realized through soul killing materialism or stultifying theological dogmatism. Obscurations such as these come from the dark quality of indifference, lack of consideration for others, and failure to really think. They come from the quality of passion which enslaves, and lust for the things of this world rather than their wise use. The Great Buddha, seeing the true cause of human woe, pointed out the way to soul-freedom for all

from the "lust and thirst of things." He saw how the latter blinds the soul and makes it

> Dumb to the summons of the true life kept
> For him who false puts by.

Theosophy exists to help re-awaken the divine in man that lies slumbering from sheer neglect when not from denial or abuse. It is to arouse a truer sense of Brotherhood for its own sake—without any strings attached. The notion that competition can help on such work is to infect the spiritual health of a practical ideal with one of the many virus diseases of the age. Competition leads to rivalry, "friendly" or otherwise, and ultimately to the evils of dictatorship and the needless agony of war. Cooperation, not competition, is the way and law of brotherhood. Emulation of whatever is found to be true and good, no matter where or by whom, can accomplish wonders.

Two paths lie ever before man. The power to choose implies as much. In reality these two paths are not external, however much they may be encountered in the midst of externals. They mark the distinction between the true and the false, the personal and the impersonal, the selfish and the selfless. Why are there so many obscurants in the way of a truly better life? And why are they often so subtle and difficult to see? Because they are rooted in the personal nature. That which may seem to be (at least superficially) most attractive is not necessarily the better or the best. Seldom is it so, and no higher life is possible without overcoming these obscurities. Not to pass judgment on the spiritual condition of another, not to condemn in any one of a thousand ways, is easy enough to talk about and intellectually agree upon, but quite a different matter to really live and practice. Especially is this so in the midst of trial and trouble. Yet it is just such failings as these that separate man from man and from the divine in nature, thus agonizing the soul. The only way is to face the issue, engage in the necessary self-discipline, and achieve the conquest—not for ourselves alone, but for all. A great help in this regard is to strive to see beneath the appearances of things and beings, to seek to understand causes, and to look to the enduring soul of all that is.

Most troubles, whether in human relations, difficult situations, health and disease, or any other, lie in dealing only with effects instead of seeking out and correcting *causes*. Yet this is the essential of all our problems. Human nature tends to judge everything and everyone by

appearances. Divine nature looks to causes, motives, and strives compassionately to deal with these—not to misunderstand and condemn. Demoniacal natures hate everything, are satisfied with nothing, and commit every conceivable folly. If we learn anything from witnessing such contrasts as these (and that is the way we do learn), forever try to be and do better, there is always the possibility of attaining. There is no end to the possibilities of attainment. No matter what the obstacles may be or how gigantic their appearance, we need place confidence in nothing less than the Supreme.

Do we think others are not doing their duty? Do we really know what their duty is? "The duty of another is full of danger." This ageless truth is seldom realized.

It is open to anyone to be selfish, unselfish, or selfless. It is possible even to be spiritually selfish. But we do not help others by judging them to be so. We help by being or striving to be spiritually wise and selfless. This is true wherever we are and in whatever we have to do. Sometimes we help others most by not bothering them at all and simply doing our own duty. At other times our duty is to actively help. Whatever needs doing must be a help in some way to someone or to all. These are lessons we all have at some time to learn.

Perhaps one of the most prevalent mistakes made in supposedly helping others is to think they should do a work as we think they should, or according to a plan we lay down for them. Their way is theirs and ours is ours, and each learns most through his or her own way. From each other we can learn how to improve our way, but only as we see it so. Were we to practice this kind of detachment we might be more often and more pleasantly surprised. Harmony, as Theosophy declares, is not sameness, but a balancing of diversities.

All these questions revolve around one central idea, one fundamental principle. That is the concept of the One true Self of all. If we examine them from that point of view, instead of the exclusive personal one, the answers become more plainly obvious. Confidence in the Supreme Spirit above all else is the essence of a Theosophic life.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Beyond the Five Senses"

A volume of this title (Lippincott Co., 1957) provides an extended anthology on psychic phenomena and its implications. *Beyond the Five Senses* is edited by Eileen J. Garrett, publisher of the Quarterly Review of Psychical Research, *Tomorrow,* and the President of The Parapsychology Foundation, Inc., which sponsors both regional and international conventions on psychic research.

In her introduction Mrs. Garrett provides information on the extent of present academic participation in extrasensory investigation. The parapsychology laboratory of Duke University is now well-known throughout the world, the chief subjects of research being clairvoyance, telepathy and psychokinesis, "usually grouped together under the name of extrasensory perception, or known by the initials ESP." Institutions engaged in research similar to that carried on at Duke are St. Joseph's College (Philadelphia), the University of Utrecht (Netherlands), and the University of Freiburg (Germany). Such university research, moreover, is hospitable to a sharing of data with independent investigatory bodies in Canada, Great Britain, the European continent and Australasia.

Distinguished Contributors

Among the well-known writers who have contributed articles on ESP to *Tomorrow* (and included in the present anthology) are Dr. Hornell Hart, Professor of Sociology at Duke University, Professor C. J. Ducasse of Brown University, Leslie LeCron, a practicing psychologist and author of a recent work on hypnotism, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, and Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University. As Mrs. Garrett says, "the primary significance of this book lies in the fact that it could be assembled at all just after the mid-point of this twentieth century and that it can be expected to command the respectful attention of the best minds of our time. This is striking evidence of how far what formerly was called psychic research, and is now generally termed parapsychology, has come in the last fifty years." Mrs. Garrett writes:

> What of the future? It seems to me that two branches of science in particular are drawing very close in their subject matter, though they

are extremely diverse in many ways: modern physics and modern psychology. Inescapably, they are coming to a place of meeting, and the scene of that meeting will be the area of the human personality. Each has much to give to and learn from the other in the study of man. Is it too much to hope and to expect that the great mass of data provided by parapsychology can act as a bridge by which they can be brought together in the study of man himself, incomparably the most interesting and important fact in our universe?

"LOCK WITHOUT THE KEY"

Of chief interest to readers of THEOSOPHY will be the essay referred to in Mrs. Garrett's introduction—Dr. Rhine's "What Next in Parapsychology?" Dr. Rhine is frank to admit that the wealth of data assembled by researchers still provides no clue as to the manner in which psychical phenomena may be controlled, providing in the following paragraphs evidence of a fully open mind:

> The parapsychologist of today is still baffled by the task of bringing the operation of psi under some measure of control. The very fact that we can now safely accept the psi as a lawful, natural capacity makes us all the more impatient with its extremely elusive character. The point is that this inability to apply what is known so as to secure an effective though slight, control over the ability, stirs a deep impatience for fresh exploration in the experimenter.
>
> That challenge is, I think, setting the dominant tone, at least for this generation of parapsychologists. *Why is it that we cannot produce reliable psi effects on demand, even in ourselves?* Surely, one reasons, those who have distinguished themselves in long series of tests still have some sort of potential that, if we but use our wits properly, we can reactivate.
>
> Parapsychology is somewhat in the position of having found a great treasure and, having verified the discovery with oft-repeated yet faint and flickering glimpses of it, of finding itself still barred from full possession by a lock to which it has not yet found the key. It is, of course, a possibility that this is as far as we will ever get in gaining control over psi. But in all history no such stalemate has yet been encountered, and it is definitely against the lesson of the intellectual past to entertain any such speculation of despair.

ESP AND "THE SURVIVAL PROBLEM"

Dr. Rhine has been persistent in calling the attention of his colleagues to the possible relevance of psychical research data to the question of human immortality, the area of common interest between religion and psychical research. There is *also* an area of common ground

between the researchers and students of Theosophy, clearly indicated by Dr. Rhine, who writes:

> By far the largest common ground thus far recognized by religion and parapsychology is that of the problem of spirit survival—the question whether there exists in human personality anything that can effectively endure beyond the death of the bodily organism. This is just a limited focus of the general question of whether there is any extraphysical reality in the universe. The latter concept has always been a major part of the structure of the religious interpretation of man and nature.
>
> The very basic fact of the establishment of psi occurrence furnishes an applicable principle of great significance to this problem of spirit survival. If there were no evidence of anything transcending physical law, if there were no defiance of the limits of mechanistic interpretation of man and the living world, there would be no point at all in thinking further about the survival problem.

Astral Projection

While *Beyond the Five Senses* contains much material of secondary philosophical importance, growing interest in paranormal phenomena which it reveals, makes it an interesting book to scan. Particularly will Theosophists be impressed by Prof. Hart's documentation of astral projection, since correlations between Prof. Hart's latest data and conclusions and similar data and conclusions furnished in H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* are easily made. This subdivision, perhaps, merits separate treatment at a later date, for Prof. Hart's discovery is that astral projection may be an accomplishment of the active human *will,* as well as a "spontaneous phenomenon."

Religious Boom Questioned

The Very Reverend James A. Pike, Dean of St. John's Cathedral, of New York City, writing in July *Coronet* under the title, "Huckstering God is Dangerous," explains why he looks askance at the "religious boom" so gratifying to some other religionists. Dean Pike cites certain aspects of the boom:

> In the last 15 years, the percentage of increase in church membership has doubled over the previous 15 years. More and more people are actually *going* to church and participating in the manifold activities centered in parish houses. There is a bumper crop of religious books now selling, more and more people hear and view religious radio and TV programs, and more and more space in the papers is devoted to "church news."

Everywhere we are seeing the church adopt what hitherto were regarded as "secular" forms of promotion; and more and more church buildings are reflecting the material progress of their time. We hire public relations directors, we use press releases. Our fund drives are conducted under professional direction.

Lack of Effective Results

Since "the church has a spiritual task, though it is set in the world," Dean Pike is heartily in favor of "effective instrumentalities." He has, however, serious misgivings—for two reasons:

First, we are not seeing results commensurate with the growth and activism of the religious enterprise. The divorce rate continues to be disturbingly high. Juvenile delinquency is on the increase (in spite of the rapid expansion of church "youth activities" and the increasing habit of providing professional personnel to lead them). Mental and nervous breakdown appear to be on the increase; aberrations such as homosexuality, dope addiction and alcoholism are more evident. There seems to be no surcease in corruption—in high places and low. . . .

A second thing that worries me about the "hustle and bustle" of the church today is what it is doing to the clergy and lay leadership. The clergy these days are so involved in the pressure of "works" they have little time for development of inner peace and the nourishment of personal integration. Their machinery has become too much for them. . . . The minister is not given time to be . . . a man of God, a scholar, a minister.

Critical Attitude Lacking

"All too often," Dean Pike says, "our lay leaders are 'sage' men, who have made the church governing body a 'closed corporation' and who reproduce their own kind as their successors in office. This results in almost automatic preservation of the status quo. They forget that the purpose of preaching is [not only] to comfort the afflicted, [but] *also* to afflict the comfortable." Thus—

For all too many, "religion" is a quiet support for things as they are. . . . They do not see it as a critique of their own lives and of the common life. Hence the all too common assumption that the church is simply one of the many "worth-while" influences which support things the way they are.

Right in line with this is the acceptance in personal life of God as one *among a number of resources* for happiness and success. The fact is, for many, God is something to be "used." If it is a sense of

peace and tranquility one lacks, "God" is perceived as quite as good as—or better than—a sleeping tablet or a tranquilizer. This is a perversion of religion. The Lord's Prayer says; "Thy will be done"—presumably with our help. It does not say "my will be done—with Thy help."

A Modern Parallel Drawn

The danger, Dean Pike feels, is that the *machinery* ("all the modern accoutrements and methods") is "too often taken as a substitute for the real thing." He compares the present with biblical times as follows:

> It is common in preaching to point to the danger of being a Pharisee. But we must remember that the Pharisee prayed daily in the temple; he fasted twice in the week; he gave tithes of all he possessed.
>
> In Jesus' time the "opposite number" of the Pharisee was the Sadducee. Now rarely do we hear a preacher charge his congregation with Sadduceeism. But actually such a charge would be more to the point. The Sadducees were the respected people, they were the ones who ran the temple, and they ran it well—too well: the only recorded instance of Jesus' anger was when he drove the money-changers from the temple (the record doesn't indicate that he ever got that mad at the Pharisees).

Ancient and Modern Sadducees

> The Sadducees, with urbanity and sophistication, laughed at the pharisaical emphasis on self-discipline and religious earnestness. Eternal life had no place in their thought, because they had it very good *now*.
>
> They were at least more candid than our modern Sadducees: *they,* in contradiction to the Pharisees, plainly denied the reality of eternal life. For there is little difference between denying the life to come and caring little about it.
>
> It is Sadduceeism that is the church's main problem today. . . . The church can go on without many things of the flesh. But it cannot go on without things of the spirit.

Religious Surge Misinterpreted

Another churchman, Catholic Bishop James J. Byrne, of Boise, Idaho, seems to agree in general with Dean Pike's skeptical evaluation of the apparent upsurge in religion. Bishop Byrne, who does not see "an extraordinary resurgence of religion in America," says (Los Angeles *Examiner,* June 26):

> There is, of course, a lot of talk about religion; but I think we have misinterpreted its connotation. Actually, what I believe is happening is this: We are losing the lukewarm and we are dividing into

the hot and the cold. Atheism does not have a loud voice and this, perhaps, misleads the religious optimists.

British and American Opinion Compared

An Easter spot-check of lay opinions, reported by George Gallup in the Los Angeles *Times,* April 19 and 21, reveals that:

> More Americans than Britons accept three doctrines of Christianity —the divinity of Christ, the existence of a devil and belief in an after-life. Although great majorities in both the United States and Great Britain believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, there are many more Britons than Americans who believe that Christ was only a man or just a myth.
>
> In both countries a majority believes in life after death, but almost twice as many Britons as Americans either refute the idea or are uncertain about an after-life.
>
> Whereas a majority of Americans believes that there is a devil, a greater number of Britons deny than affirm the existence of Satan.

Typical Variations in Opinion

> The U.S. phase of the study finds that substantially more women than men in this country believe in each of the three doctrines. Education is an important factor as regards the views toward the divinity of Jesus and the existence of a devil. In each instance there are fewer persons with college training who believe in these doctrines.
>
> On the question of life after death, however, little difference of opinion is noted between persons with grade school, high school or college educations. Little difference of opinion is noted between Protestants and Catholics in this country on any of the three questions.

Highlights of Survey

The question, "Is the influence of religion increasing—or is it on the decline?", discloses the following:

> The average American believes that it is increasing. The typical Briton, on the other hand, says religion is losing its influence on Britain. Throughout Great Britain, more people today think politics wields a greater influence on the way people live and their circumstances than does religion.
>
> About 8 out of every 10 U.S. adults see religion as the key to the solution of most of today's problems, while fewer than half of British adults believe religion can answer them.

The value, such as it is, of the Gallup poll is that it reveals a cross-section of the mass-mind. More than anything else, probably, religious opinions are restricted by tradition and the fear of seeming "different,"

or, conversely, are the result of un-thought-out rebellion against such tradition.

A Scholarly Opinion

Thoughtful people, those whose intellectual capacity and moral integrity permit objective analysis, are more likely to make some such observation as is attributed to Dr. Whitehead by Lucien Price in his *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead.* Dr. Whitehead observes:

> One has to speak of the end of Christianity in terms of a thousand years, but it has assumed so many forms in its history that I often speculate on its taking a new, a perhaps final form here in America, coalescing with your democratic idea of life. But the clergy have lost their hold. In America a man in trouble now goes to his doctor, he would not think of telling his parson, saving here or there when his parson is an exceptional individual.
>
> The problem in religion is to link finitude to infinitude. The trouble with the Bible has been its interpreters, who have scaled and whittled down that sense of infinitude into finite and limited concepts.

The Rationality of Buddhism

It is soothing to turn from Christianity, with its heavy emphasis on *belief,* to an article with the above title, by Rev. U thatila, in *The Light of Buddha* for December, 1956. Rev. U thatila says:

> Buddhism is not a religion in the sense in which that word is commonly understood, for it is not a system of faith and worship. . . . Buddhism begins as a search for truth. It does not begin with unfounded assumptions concerning any God or First Cause, and it does not claim to present the whole truth of the absolute beginning and end of mankind's spiritual pilgrimage in the form of a divine revelation. The Buddha himself searched and discovered with direct insight the nature of the cosmos, the causes of its arising and of its passing away, and the real cause of suffering and a way in which it could be brought to an end for the sake of all living beings. Having done so he proclaimed the principles on which he had conducted his research, so that all who wished to do so could follow his system and know the final truth themselves.

The Test of Truth

"It is for this reason," says Rev. U thatila, "that the Buddha was able to make a statement that was entirely different from that of all other religious leaders of his time":

It is natural that doubt should arise in mind. I tell you not to believe anything merely because it has been handed down by tradition, or because it has been said by some great personage in the past, or because it is commonly believed, or because others have told it to you, or even because I myself have said it. But whatever you are asked to believe, ask yourself whether it is true in the light of your experience, whether it is in conformity with reason and good principles and whether it is conducive to the highest good and welfare of all beings, and only if it passes this test should you accept it and act in accordance with it. (*Kalama Sutta, Anguttara Nikaya.*)

BUDDHA CAN BUT POINT THE WAY

Rev. U thatila continues:

This statement made by the Buddha two thousand five hundred years ago still retains its original force. It is a statement of the scientific principle of reasoning and also a definition of the rationality of Buddhism. The follower of the Buddha is invited to doubt, until he has examined all the evidence for the basic facts of the teaching and has himself experimented with them to see if they be true. Having proved by these means that they are true, he is able to accept them. One of the qualities of the *Dhamma,* the teaching of the Buddha, is that it is "that which invites everyone to come and see for himself."

The Buddha taught men to rely upon themselves in order to achieve their own deliverance, and not to look to any external saviour. He never puts himself forward as a mediator between us and our final deliverance. But he can tell us what to do, because he has done it himself and so knows the way; but unless we ourselves act, the Buddha cannot take us to our goal. Though we may "take refuge in the Buddha," as the Buddhist phrase in the simple ceremony of pledging ourselves to live a righteous life, it must not be with any blind faith that he can save us. He can point out the way; he can tell us of its difficulties and of the beauties which we shall find as we tread the way; but he cannot tread it for us. We must tread the way ourselves.

BASIS OF BHIKKU DEVOTION

The devotional rite of the Buddhist monks is called "the three-fold Refuges," comprising the Buddha, his Doctrine, and his Holy Order. Rev. U thatila explains the basis of this devotion:

In Buddhism mere belief is dethroned and replaced by confidence based on knowledge of truth. Reason enables man to arrange and systematize knowledge in order to find truth while confidence gives him determination to be true to his ideals. Confidence or faith becomes superstition when it is not accompanied by reason but reason with-

out confidence would turn a man into a machine without feeling or enthusiasm for his ideals. Reason seeks disinterestedly to realise truth, but confidence moulds a man's character and gives him strength of will to break all the barriers which hinder his progress in achieving his aims. While reason makes a man rejoice in truths he has already discovered, confidence gives him fresh courage and helps him onward to further conquests, to aspire to work strenuously for the realisation of what has not yet been realised. It is this saddha which has the power to transform cold abstract rationalism into a philosophy of fervent hope, love, and compassion. It is also this saddha which is the basis of the loving devotion to the great teacher, the Buddha, his teaching and his holy order.

Buddhism in the United States

"More than 500 persons commemorated the Spring Festival of Buddhism yesterday at the Community Church of New York," reports the New York *Times,* May 5, when the Rev. Donald Harrington explained the "living truth" of Buddha at an interfaith service.

In his sermon, called "The Three Great Heresies, the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path," Mr. Harrington urged the congregation to turn to the teachings of Buddha in these "few quiet days before Billy Graham hits New York with his oversimplified formula of salvation."

Mr. Harrington described Buddha as "one of the first great psychological teachers" as well as "one of the first great liberals." He said there was much to be learned from Buddha in this age of "satisfaction of the senses."

The Heresies, the Truths, and the Path

The *Times* recapitulates Mr. Harrington's points:

The Three Great Heresies were listed as: The heresy of individuality, an illusion that we are individual creatures apart from the rest of creation; the heresy of doubt, an illusion that it is possible for man to live without faith; the heresy of ritualism and ceremonials, an illusion that neglects "the inner feelings of man."

The Four Noble Truths, as explained by Mr. Harrington, are: All who live must suffer because there is "no growth without suffering"; suffering is the "common lot" in which all men share; man can "rise above suffering" by placing his life on a spiritual plane; truth can be found only by casting off the desires "which weigh man down."

And the Noble Eightfold Path, which Mr. Harrington called "psychologically sound," he enumerated as: right views, right resolves, right speech, right conduct, right occupation, right effort, right awareness and right state of mind.

"These are the steps," said Mr. Harrington, "by which one mounts from suffering to spiritual realization."

Emphasis on Personal Salvation Called a Fallacy

The Los Angeles *Times,* quotes the Rev. Francis B. Sayre, Jr., Dean of the Washington Cathedral, who feels that Billy Graham's emphasis on personal reform is "terribly misleading." The Episcopal clergyman, after making it clear that he was not critizing Graham "as a person," says:

> It appears to me that he lets those crowds in Madison Square Garden think that all that matters is for each of them to confess his private sins and give his life to God—and if enough press forward to let God change their single lives then, by the mere weight of numbers, New York or America or the world will be redeemed.
>
> This is a fallacy. It is terribly misleading. The salvation of the world doesn't come about by arithmetic.

Another Dimension of Sin

According to the *Times,* "Dean Sayre believes that preachers should face up to such 'great concerns' as radical brotherhood, foreign aid, disarmament, peaceful uses of atomic energy, and immigration." In his words:

> The tragedy of today is a social one. There is a dimension of sin that goes beyond the individual. It infects the very society in which we live. The remedy doesn't rely on individual repentance. More than ministers, political leaders are cast in a prophetic role today.
>
> Perhaps God can use them more effectively than he can use us preachers—such as Billy Graham or me.

A Word from a Philosopher

The fear of death, though often tacitly disregarded, is pervasive in our civilization. Bertrand Russell, in his recent book *Portraits from Memory* (Simon & Schuster), has this to say on the "final experience":

> The fear of death is somewhat abject and ignoble. The best way to overcome it—so at least it seems to me—is to make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly merged in the universal life.

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The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

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Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

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